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Kevin's Law heads to governor

LANSING – Legislation designed to create an assisted outpatient treatment program unanimously passed both chambers today and is headed to the governor, announced Sen. Tom George, R-Texas Township.

The “Kevin’s Law” package, Senate Bills 683-686, creates an outpatient treatment pathway as an alternative to hospitalization for individuals with severe mental illness. Left untreated, the severely mentally ill often end up homeless or incarcerated.

The bipartisan legislation was introduced in response to the 2000 beating death of Kevin Heisinger in the Kalamazoo bus/train station by a person with a severe mental illness who was not compliant with treatment. Kevin's Law would safeguard the public by allowing family members and others to intervene to help secure needed treatment for individuals with mental illness before they become a danger to themselves or others.

“I am pleased to see this package pass so that we can prevent future tragedies such as what happened to Kevin Heisinger,” George said. “This is the culmination of over three years of hard work by many people. This will help bring needed care to the severely mentally ill and will help make our streets safer.”

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